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ABSTRACT

A study gathered followup information on the 1983-84 graduates of Oregon community college vocational students. Of the 83 percent of the graduates who were either employed or pursuing further education, 73 percent were doing so in areas related to the training they had received while enrolled in the community college program. Female graduates employed full-time earned an average of $859 per month versus $941 for males. There were no significant differences between the current activities of students belonging to ethnic or racial minority groups and those in the dominant group. The current activities of respondents who were academically or economically disadvantaged or who had limited English proficiency while attending community college vocational programs were quite similar to graduates who were neither disadvantaged nor handicapped. However, handicapped respondents experienced a substantially higher unemployment rate than the other program completers. Substantially more early leavers were unemployed, and considerably more early leavers than program completers were employed in areas related to their vocational preparation. Employers considered the basic skills and technical knowledge of the graduates as more than adequate, and the overall college services received a C-plus from the graduates surveyed. (The survey instrument is included in this report.) (MN)

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FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF 1983-84 COMMUNITY COLLEGE VOCATIONAL PROGRAM STUDENTS

Spring 1985

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PREFACE

This report describes the findings of the follow-up study of 1983-84 Oregon community college vocational students. Surveys upon which these findings are based were conducted during the spring of 1985 by the colleges.

The Oregon Department of Education extends its gratitude to the participating institutions for their continuing cooperation and assistance with the study.

Verne A. Duncan
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

* Most of the 1983-84 students of community college vocational programs in Oregon were employed in occupations related to their preparation.

* Only a relatively small proportion of the students were pursuing education, and most of them were enrolled in areas related to their vocational preparation.

* There were no significant differences between the current activities of students belonging to ethnic or racial minority groups and those in the dominant group.

* The current activities of respondents who were academically or economically disadvantaged or had limited-English proficiency while attending community college vocational programs were quite similar to graduates who were neither disadvantaged nor handicapped. Handicapped respondents experienced a substantially higher unemployment rate than other program completers.

* Substantially more early leavers were unemployed than program completers, and considerably more program completers than leavers were employed in areas related to their vocational preparation.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to determine the activities and perceptions of persons who had completed state-approved community college vocational programs during the 1983-84 academic year. The results of the study will be used by the Department's staff in their planning for program improvement.

The 13 Oregon community colleges and two community college service districts mailed questionnaires to or conducted telephone surveys of their former students during the spring of 1985. A predetermined set of items (Appendix A) appeared on the survey instruments administered by all colleges; however, most colleges included additional questions in their instruments. The colleges followed-up on nonrespondents at least once. Questionnaires were also mailed to a sampling of persons who were enrolled in vocational programs during fall 1983 but not winter, spring or fall 1984 and had not completed their studies (hereinafter referred to as "leavers"). Finally, employers of the completers and leavers working full-time in occupations related to their vocational preparation were asked to rate the employees' vocational preparation. Although many of the colleges asked more questions, all colleges acquired a predetermined set of information from employers (Appendix B). Usable information was acquired from 2,250 program completers, 903 leavers and 584 employers.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES OF FORMER STUDENTS

Approximately 83 percent of the respondents were working or pursuing further education during the survey (Table 1). The largest proportion (72%) were working or working while attending school. Nine percent of the respondents reported that they were unemployed. This is comparable to the rate reported for the Oregon labor market during the same period. Respondents who had been enrolled in secretarial, electronics, metals and graphics programs experienced the highest rates of unemployment (18, 14, 14 and 14 percent, respectively).

Respondents were asked to indicate whether or not their employment or further education was related to the vocational preparation that they received while attending an Oregon community college. Approximately 73 percent of the respondents were involved with related work or education (Table 2). The highest rate of related work or education was reported by students of allied health programs; the lowest proportion was for completers in marketing and forest products programs.

TABLE 1
CURRENT ACTIVITIES OF 1983-84 COMMUNITY COLLEGE
VOCATIONAL STUDENTS BY PROGRAM AREA

Program Area	N	Percentage				
		Work	Work & School	School Only	Unemployed	Other
Agriculture	73	59%	16%	15%	6%	4%
Marketing	90	58%	19%	9%	4%	10%
Health Occupations	595	70%	13%	6%	3%	8%
Food Services	39	62%	10%	10%	13%	5%
Accounting	77	58%	16%	4%	8%	14%
Clerical	514	54%	20%	12%	10%	6%
Secretarial	207	60%	7%	4%	18%	11%
Mechanics	173	55%	16%	12%	11%	7%
Electronics	224	51%	18%	10%	14%	6%
Metals	138	62%	7%	11%	14%	6%
Child Care	43	51%	14%	21%	5%	9%
Drafting	78	60%	19%	6%	9%	5%
Graphics	64	67%	9%	8%	14%	2%
Service	108	45%	32%	7%	10%	6%
Forest Products	66	79%	7%	6%	5%	3%
Other	623	44%	13%	20%	8%	15%
TOTAL	3,112	57%	15%	11%	9%	9%

TABLE 2
PERCENT OF 1983-84 COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS
WHO WERE EMPLOYED OR PURSUING FURTHER EDUCATION IN AREAS
RELATED TO THEIR VOCATIONAL PREPARATION BY PROGRAM AREA

	Related to Vocational Preparation					
	Work		School		Work or School	
Program Area	N	%	N	%	N	%
Agriculture	32	74	9	82	11	92
Marketing	30	57	6	75	14	82
Health Occupations	375	91	34	90	76	97
Food Services	18	75	3	75	4	100
Accounting	36	80	3	100	10	83
Clerical	189	69	44	73	90	89
Secretarial	88	71	4	44	10	67
Mechanics	69	73	16	80	23	85
Electronics	77	68	20	87	34	83
Metals	53	62	11	73	9	90
Child Care	17	77	7	78	4	67
Drafting	30	64	4	80	13	87
Graphics	21	49	4	80	5	83
Service	39	80	6	86	31	89
Forest Products	34	65	3	75	1	20
Other	156	57	30	25	44	53
ALL PROGRAMS	1,264	72	204	59	379	81

INCOME EARNED BY FORMER STUDENTS

The average monthly income of former students who were employed full-time in occupations related to their vocational preparation was $978 during the survey period; a decrease from the previous year. Similar to findings of previous surveys, the median income earned by female graduates was substantially lower than the average for males (Table 3). Females earned $859 per month versus $941 for male graduates, a $984 annual difference.

TABLE 3
AVERAGE (MEAN) MONTHLY EARNINGS OF 1983-84 COMMUNITY COLLEGE VOCATIONAL PROGRAM COMPLETERS WHO WERE EMPLOYED FULL-TIME IN OCCUPATIONS RELATED TO THEIR VOCATIONAL PREPARATION BY SEX AND BY PROGRAM AREA

	Female		Male	
Program Area	N	Mean	N	Mean
Agriculture	7	$1,208	27	$ 515
Marketing	16	646	20	1,025
Health Occupations	332	795	84	990
Food Services	10	870	11	690
Accounting	21	943	11	637
Clerical	139	902	71	903
Secretarial	93	689	2	1,100
Mechanics	25	884	56	837
Electronics	47	1,025	44	1,212
Metals	7	731	48	985
Child Care	14	650	4	477
Drafting	15	958	19	794
Graphics	13	1,224	11	532
Service	25	1,327	16	851
Forest Products	5	495	28	583
Other	57	997	42	893
TOTAL	826	$859	494	$941

RATINGS OF PREPARATION, INSTRUCTION AND SERVICES

The overall preparation of graduates was rated as being more than adequate for their jobs. (Table 4) Employers considered basic skills and technical knowledge as generally more than adequate.

Former students who were employed full-time in related occupations were asked to rate the instruction and services that they received while attending a community college (Table 5). The overall college services received a "C-plus" from the graduates.

TABLE 4

AVERAGE RATINGS BY EMPLOYERS OF THE PREPARATION OF 1983-84 PROGRAM COMPLETERS WHO WERE EMPLOYED FULL-TIME IN RELATED OCCUPATIONS BY PROGRAM AREA

	Mean Rating by Program Area																
Selected Topics	Agri-culture	Market-ing	Health	Food	Account-ing	Cler-ical	Secre-tarial	Mechan-ical	Electri-cal	Metals	Child Care	Draft-ing	Graphics	Ser-vice	Forest	Other	Total
General Topics																	
Mathematics	3.3	3.3	3.7	4.2	4.3	3.7	3.9	3.7	3.7	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.0	3.7	4.1	3.7	3.7
Reading	3.3	3.5	4.0	4.0	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.9	3.5	3.9	3.6	5.0	4.5	4.1	3.8	4.7
Writing	3.3	3.5	3.8	4.0	3.7	3.8	3.9	3.8	3.7	3.3	3.7	3.2	5.0	3.3	4.1	3.7	3.7
Speaking	3.3	3.2	3.8	4.0	3.5	3.6	3.8	4.0	3.6	3.5	3.7	3.5	4.0	3.3	4.0	3.7	3.7
Work Attitudes	4.0	3.5	3.8	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.0	4.1	3.5	4.5	4.7	4.3	4.2
Technical Knowledge	3.3	3.6	3.8	3.5	4.0	3.9	4.2	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.9	3.5	2.0	4.3	4.2	3.8	3.8
Work Quality	4.0	3.6	4.0	4.2	4.3	4.1	4.1	3.9	4.1	4.3	4.3	4.0	4.0	4.5	4.5	4.2	4.1
Overall Preparation	3.5	3.7	3.9	4.0	3.9	4.0	4.1	3.8	3.7	3.6	4.2	3.7	3.5	3.8	4.4	3.9	3.9
Number of respondents (range)	5-6	4-11	108-136	5-6	7-8	53-70	29-39	15-18	14-18	13-16	7-11	10-14	1-2	3-4	11-13	162-211	462-582

NOTE: Rating Scale: 5.0 = Excellent; 4.0 = More Than Adequate; 3.0 = Adequate; 2.0 = Marginal; 1.0 = Inadequate

TABLE 5

AVERAGE RATINGS OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE INSTRUCTION AND SERVICES BY 1983–84 VOCATIONAL PROGRAM COMPLETERS WHO WERE EMPLOYED FULL-TIME IN RELATED OCCUPATIONS BY PROGRAM AREA

	Mean Rating by Program Area																
Selected Topics	Agri-culture	Market-ing	Health	Food	Account-ing	Cler-ical	Secre-tarial	Mechan-ical	Electri-cal	Metals	Child Care	Draft-ing	Graphics	Ser-vice	Forest	Other	Total
Instruction																	
Reading	2.1	2.3	2.1	2.6	1.9	2.3	2.4	2.2	2.2	2.5	2.4	2.2	1.9	2.1	2.1	2.0	2.2
Writing	2.1	2.1	2.1	3.0	1.8	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.0	2.4	2.4	2.2	2.1	2.2	2.2	1.9	2.1
Mathematics	2.1	1.9	2.1	2.3	1.6	2.1	2.3	1.9	1.7	2.1	2.5	1.5	1.8	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.0
Technical Knowledge	1.7	1.6	1.8	2.0	1.8	2.0	2.0	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.5	1.5	1.9	1.6	1.9	1.8
Hands-on Job Skills	1.8	1.9	1.8	2.2	2.1	2.0	1.9	1.9	2.1	1.7	1.9	1.6	1.7	2.0	1.7	1.9	1.9
College Services																	
Instructor Advising	3.8	3.7	4.2	2.8	4.0	3.5	2.8	3.5	3.2	3.4	3.2	2.9	3.1	4.2	3.5	3.6	3.6
Job Placement	3.8	3.7	4.2	2.8	4.0	3.5	2.8	3.5	3.2	3.4	3.2	2.9	3.1	4.2	3.5	3.6	3.6
Counseling Center Advising	3.3	3.8	3.5	3.5	3.3	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.5	3.7	2.9	2.9	2.6	3.7	3.4	3.3	3.4
Overall	2.4	2.3	2.2	2.3	2.0	2.4	2.0	2.3	2.4	2.2	2.2	1.9	1.9	2.8	2.2	2.2	2.3
Number of respon-dents (range)	28-39	28-38	310-430	18-35	34-41	197-249	78-97	63-81	81-100	39-56	16-18	27-35	16-26	22-58	31-35	135-173	1155-1470

Rating Scale for Instruction Topics: 1 = Excellent; 2 = Above Average; 3 = Average; 4 = Below Average; 5 = Poor
Rating Scale for College Services: 5 = Excellent; 4 = Good; 3 = Average; 2 = Needs Improvement; 1 = Poor

CURRENT ACTIVITIES BY GROUPS

Sex

About the same proportion of female as male students were employed and/or pursuing further education (Table 6). Approximately the same percentage of males as females were working. In the past, relatively more females than males reported that they were working. Relatively more females than males continued to work in related areas, and more females were pursuing related education (Table 7).

TABLE 6
CURRENT ACTIVITIES OF 1983-84 COMMUNITY COLLEGE VOCATIONAL STUDENTS BY SEX

Current Activity	Percentage by Sex	
	Females	Males
Work Only	59%	63%
Work and School	16%	12%
School Only	8%	10%
Unemployed	9%	9%
Other	8%	6%
TOTAL	100%	100%
NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	1,492	1,039

TABLE 7
PERCENT OF 1983-84 COMMUNITY COLLEGE VOCATIONAL STUDENTS WHO WERE EMPLOYED OR PURSUING EDUCATION IN AREAS RELATED TO THEIR VOCATIONAL PREPARATION BY SEX

Current Activity	Females		Males	
	N	%	N	%
Related Employment	838	75%	504	65%
Related Education	284	79%	163	71%

Race or Ethnicity

About the same proportion of minority as Caucasian students were pursuing further education or working during the survey (Table 8). Similarly, relatively as many minority as Caucasian students were working in areas related to their vocational preparation (Table 9). However more minority students were pursuing further education that was related to their vocational preparation.

TABLE 8
CURRENT ACTIVITIES OF 1983-84 COMMUNITY COLLEGE
VOCATIONAL STUDENTS BY RACE/ETHNICITY

Current Activity	Minority	Caucasian
Work	44%	63%
Work and School	25%	11%
School	13%	9%
Unemployed	11%	8%
Other	8%	8%
TOTAL	100%*	100%*
NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	836	1,936

TABLE 9
PERCENT OF 1983-84 COMMUNITY COLLEGE VOCATIONAL STUDENTS
WHO WERE EMPLOYED OR PURSUING FURTHER EDUCATION
IN AREAS RELATED TO THEIR VOCATIONAL PREPARATION BY RACE/ETHNICITY

	Minority		Caucasian	
Current Activity	N	%	N	%
Related Employment	376	65%	1,117	67%
Related Education	188	60%	235	46%

*Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

Special Needs

The unemployment rate (9%) for disadvantaged graduates was equal to unemployment among other former students (9%) (Table 10). Relatively more handicapped graduates, however, were unemployed (16%). The proportion (59%) of handicapped completers who were employed in areas related to their vocational preparation was lower than for other students (approximately 66%); however the proportion pursuing related education (57%) was higher than for other students (51%) (Table 11).

TABLE 10
CURRENT ACTIVITIES OF 1983-84 COMMUNITY COLLEGE VOCATIONAL STUDENTS BY SPECIAL NEEDS CONDITIONS

Current Activity	Handicapped	Disadvantaged	None
Work	57%	57%	57%
Work and School	7%	17%	15%
School	13%	10%	11%
Unemployed	16%	9%	9%
Other	6%	7%	9%
TOTAL	100%*	100%	100%*
NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	68	491	2,594

TABLE 11
PERCENT OF 1983-84 COMMUNITY COLLEGE VOCATIONAL STUDENTS WHO WERE EMPLOYED OR PURSUING FURTHER EDUCATION IN AREAS RELATED TO THEIR VOCATIONAL PREPARATION BY SPECIAL NEEDS CONDITIONS

	Handicapped		Disadvantaged		None	
Current Activity	N	%	N	%	N	%
Related Employment	26	59%	250	69%	1,217	66%
Related Education	8	57%	68	50%	347	51%

*Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

EARLY LEAVERS

Activities of leavers during the follow-up surveys were quite dissimilar to those of program completers. Considerably more leavers (13%) than program completers (7%) were unemployed (Table 12). An equal proportion of early leavers and completers were pursuing related further education. For those who were employed, more program completers (74%) than leavers (52%) were doing so in areas related to their vocational preparation (Table 13).

TABLE 12
CURRENT ACTIVITIES OF 1983-84 COMMUNITY COLLEGE
VOCATIONAL PROGRAM COMPLETERS AND LEAVERS

Current Activity	Leavers	Completers
Work	45%	63%
Work and School	21%	13%
School	12%	10%
Unemployed	13%	7%
Other	9%	8%
TOTAL	100%	100%*
NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	903	2,046

TABLE 13
PERCENT OF 1983-84 COMMUNITY COLLEGE VOCATIONAL PROGRAM
COMPLETERS AND LEAVERS WHO WERE EMPLOYED OR PURSUING
FURTHER EDUCATION IN RELATED AREAS

	Leavers		Completers	
Current Activity	N	%	N	%
Related Employment	311	52%	1,141	74%
Related Education	168	56%	255	56%

*Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE TO INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS

A. What is your current educational status?

1. Currently attending school
2. Not currently attending school

B. If you are attending school, is your program of study related to your community college vocational training?

1. Yes
2. No

C. How would you grade (A, B, C, D, F) the college's efforts in the following areas in preparing you for employment or further education?

_____ Communication skills
_____ Reading skills
_____ Writing skills
_____ Math skills
_____ (Hands-on) job skills
_____ Technical knowledge

D. How would you rate the community college in the following areas?

1. Excellent
2. Good
3. Average
4. Needs improvement
5. Poor
6. Don't know or didn't use

_____ Instructor advising
_____ Job placement
_____ Vocational counseling
_____ Overall

E. What is your current employment status?

1. Employed full-time (35 hours or more per week).
2. Employed part-time (less than 35 hours per week).
3. Employed (full-time military service).
4. Unemployed (not employed, but actively seeking employment).
5. Not in the labor force (not employed and not seeking employment because of choice, illness, full-time student status, retirement, pregnancy, or other such reasons).

F. Present Job Information:

Job Title _____

G. Is this job related to your field of vocational training?

1. Yes, it is directly or closely related.
2. No, it is only remotely related or is not related at all.

H. What is your current salary before deductions? (Do not add in overtime.)

$_____ per _____

OR What is your monthly income before deductions?

1. Less than $499	7. $1,000-1,099
2. $500-599	8. $1,100-1,199
3. $600-699	9. $1,200-1,299
4. $700-799	10. $1,300-1,499
5. $800-899	11. Over $1,500
6. $900-999	

This is based on how many hours per week _____?

I. Name of company or firm (if self-employed, write self): (This is for job locations analysis.)

_____

_____
Company or Firm's Mailing Address

_____ _____ _____
City State Zip Code

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE TO INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYERS

A. Vocational Training Evaluation

Please rate the vocational training received by the individual in the following areas:

	Excellent (5)	More Than Adeq. (4)	Adequate (3)	Marginal (2)	Inadequate (1)	Does Not Apply
1. Mathematical Skills	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
2. Technical Knowledge	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
3. Reading Skills	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
4. Writing Skills	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
5. Speaking Skills	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
6. Work Attitude	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
7. Work Quality	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

B. Overall Rating

What is your overall rating of the vocational training received by this individual as it relates to the requirements of his/her job?

Excellent (5)	More Than Adequate (4)	Adequate (3)	Marginal (2)	Inadequate (1)
[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

C. Relative Preparation

As a result of this person's vocational training, how would you rate his/her preparation in relation to other employees in his/her work group who did not receive the same training?

[] No basis for comparison
[] Individual is better prepared
[] Both are about the same
[] Individual is less prepared

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